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DE RUEHSG #1013/01 3231051  
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R 181051Z NOV 08  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3968  
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3629  
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2173  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1136  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0530  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1841  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 5800  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4096  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1982  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 001013

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [OPRC](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [CI](#)  
SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - NOVEMBER 15-17

FRONT PAGE NEWS

1. THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (ANFE) DID NOT ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT'S SALARY ADJUSTMENT AND CALLED FOR AN INDEFINITE NATIONAL STRIKE BEGINNING TODAY THAT WILL AFFECT HEALTH SERVICES, CUSTOMS, PORTS, AND SCHOOLS; RICARDO LAGOS OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED THE PPD'S NOMINATION TO RUN IN THE CONCERTACION'S PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY.

U.S. RELATED

2. INTERVIEW WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE'S COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA, CONGRESSMAN ELIOT ENGEL, ENTITLED, "I WILL SUGGEST PRESIDENT OBAMA TO HAVE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH CHILE."

INQUIRED ABOUT BILATERAL RELATIONS: "CHILE IS THE PERFECT PARTNER FOR THE UNITED STATES, BECAUSE BOTH SHARE SIMILAR CONCERNS REGARDING DEMOCRACY, THE ECONOMY, AND POVERTY. THE UNITED STATES IS A LEADER IN THE FREE WORLD AND CHILE IS CERTAINLY A LEADER IN LATIN AMERICA.... RELATIONS WITH CHILE ARE EXCELLENT, BUT COULD BE BETTER. CHILE IS EXACTLY THE KIND OF COUNTRY WITH WHICH THE UNITED STATES SHOULD HAVE GREATER COOPERATION. CHILE IS A NATURAL PARTNER. IT HAS CIVIL RIGHTS AND A GREAT STANDARD OF LIVING, WHICH IS A GREAT INCENTIVE TO WORK CLOSER TOGETHER. AND WHEN THERE IS NEW BLOOD, THERE CAN BE NEW POLICIES. THAT IS WHY I WILL RECOMMEND PRESIDENT OBAMA THAT WE HAVE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE COOPERATION WITH CHILE."

ENGEL ALSO COMMENTED ON CHAVEZ: "IF WE FAIL TO SHOW INTEREST IN THE CONTINENT, OTHER GOVERNMENTS AND MOVEMENTS WILL FILL THAT VOID; I'M TALKING ABOUT HUGO CHAVEZ' MODEL, THE IRANIANS, THE CHINESE, AND EVEN THE RUSSIANS. IF THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO SHOW LACK OF INTEREST, AS IT HAS UNTIL NOW, THESE COUNTRIES WILL GAIN POWER AND THAT WILL NOT BE GOOD FOR THE REGION OR FOR US. THE BEST WAY FOR THE UNITED STATES TO COUNTER THESE COUNTRIES IS BY WORKING WITH CHILE TO SHOW, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENT PAYMENT FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY.... I HOPE THAT AFTER OBAMA TAKES OFFICE WE CAN IMPROVE RELATIONS, BUT THIS HAS TO COME FROM BOTH SIDES" (EL MERCURIO, CONSERVATIVE, INFLUENTIAL, NEWSPAPER-OF-RECORD, SUN. CIRC. 260,108, 11/16).

3. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS DAVID JOHNSON, WILL ARRIVE IN SANTIAGO ON FRIDAY FOR AN OAS INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR CONTROL OF DRUG ABUSE (CICAD) SUMMIT. JOHNSON WILL ALSO MEET WITH THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL COUNCIL (CONACE), MARIA TERESA CHADWICK; UNDER SECRETARY OF INTERIOR FELIPE HARBOE, CARABINEROS AND THE INVESTIGATIONS POLICE (PDI) CHIEFS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS (EL MERCURIO,

CIRC. 129,000, 11/17).

¶4. NATIONAL FORESTRY CORPORATION (CONAF) REGIONAL DIRECTORS WILL MEET IN WASHINGTON WITH U.S. NATIONAL PARK OFFICIALS WHO ARE WORKING ON IMPROVING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WILD PROTECTED AREAS IN FRAMEWORK OF THE CHILE-U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND IN VIEW OF THE EXCELLENT RESULTS OF THE SISTER PARK AGREEMENT BETWEEN TORRES DEL PAINE AND YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARKS (LA PRENSA AUSTRAL REGIONAL DAILY, 11/5).

¶5. STANFORD UNIVERSITY EXPERT ON EDUCATIONAL SUBVENTION PROGRAMS, ERIC BETTINGER, VISITED CHILE INVITED BY THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY. "CHILE'S SUBVENTION SYSTEM HAS BEEN POSITIVE, BUT HAS NOT BENEFITED ALL," SAID BETTINGER, ADDING THAT THE MODEL WOULD WORK BETTER IF PUBIC SCHOOLS HAD FEWER OBSTACLES TO BECOMING MORE COMPETITIVE (EL MERCURIO, 11/17).

¶6. ALVARO VARGAS LLOSA ARTICLE: "OBAMA ADVISORS SAID THE PRESIDENT-ELECT WILL SEEK 'A DIRECT DIPLOMACY' WITH CUBA, WILL LIFT RESTRICTIONS ON TRIPS AND MONEY SENT TO THE ISLAND, BUT WILL NOT LIFT THE COMMERCIAL EMBARGO UNLESS THERE DEMOCRATIC PROGRESS" (LA TERCERA, CONSERVATIVE, INDEPENDENT, SAT. CIRC. 195,626, 11/15).

¶7. COLUMN BY INTERNATIONAL COMMENTATOR LEONIDAS IRARRAZAVAL: "BARACK OBAMA'S ELECTION HAS CHANGED EVERYTHING.... HE BRINGS HOPE FOR THOSE OF US WHO DON'T FEEL WE ARE A PRIORITY FOR THE UNITED STATES.... WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT OUR PROBLEMS WILL BE LOOKED AT MORE THOROUGHLY (DIARIO FINANCIERO, BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL DAILY, CIRC. 30,000).

¶8. REGULAR COLUMNIST JUAN FRANCISCO COLOANE WROTE: "ONE OF THE PILLARS OF BARACK OBAMA'S AGENDA ... IS TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF THE UNITED STATES ABROAD. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE IMMEDIATE CLOSURE OF THE GUANTANAMO PRISON... WORKS (ONLY) AS A SYMBOL.... (BECAUSE) GUANTANAMO IS THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG OF A MASS OF PROBLEMS THAT REQUIRE TIME AND POLITICAL REBUILDING GIVEN THEIR MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK" (EL MOSTRADOR, ON-LINE NEWS AGENCY, 11/17).

DEA / BOLIVIA

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¶9. PRESIDENT EVO MORALES' DECISION TO EXPEL THE DEA WAS THE CHANCE THAT RUSSIA WAS WAITING FOR TO STRENGTHEN ITS PRESENCE IN LATIN AMERICA. BOLIVIA WANTS TO REPLACE THE DEA WITH ANOTHER REGIONAL ORGANIZATION SUPPORTED BY UNASUR, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, FINANCED BY MOSCOW. IN SEPTEMBER, RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR TO LA PAZ LEONID GOLUBEV SAID RUSSIA WAS WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH BOLIVIA IN ALL THE COUNTER-NARCOTICS PROGRAMS "LEFT BY THE AMERICANS... BECAUSE IT IS A BIG PROBLEM." THE PURCHASE OF FIVE RUSSIAN HELICOPTERS AND POSSIBLY TWO MORE TO FIGHT NARCOTICS IN BOLIVIA "IS THE FIRST STEP" IN THIS DIRECTION, SAID THE RUSSIAN DIPLOMAT (LA TERCERA, SUN. CIRC. 222,084, 11/16).

CUBA

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¶10. THE RIO GROUP ANNOUNCED CUBA'S FULL ACCESSION TO THE BLOC. CHILEAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNDER SECRETARY ALBERTO VAN KLAVEREN SAID THIS WAS THE CONSENSUS AFTER SEVERAL YEARS. "THE RIO GROUP WANT TO PRESENT ITSELF AS A REGIONAL INTERLOCUTOR AND IN THIS CONTEXT BELIEVES IT SHOULD NOT EXCLUDE ANY COUNTRY," SAID VAN KLAVEREN (EL MERCURIO, SAT. CIRC. 173,049, 11/15).

LOCAL POLITICS

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¶11. RICARDO LAGOS OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED THE PPD HIS DECISION TO RUN AS THE PARTY'S NOMINEE IN THE CONCERTACION'S OPEN PRIMARY TO DEFINE ITS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR THE 2009 ELECTION. THIS MEANS THAT JOS MIGUEL INSULAZA, PS CANDIDATE, WILL HAVE TO STEP DOWN AND THAT LAGOS WOULD RUN AGAINST EDUARDO FREI (DC) (LA TERCERA, CIRC. 101,000, 11/7).

¶12. THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (ANFE) DID NOT ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT'S 6.5% SALARY INCREASE, STATING IT DOES NOT SUFFICE GIVEN THE 9.9% INFLATION, AND CALLED AN INDEFINITE NATIONWIDE STRIKE BEGINNING TODAY. THE STRIKE WILL AFFECT HEALTH CENTERS -- EXCEPT EMERGENCY SERVICES - MUNICIPALITIES, CUSTOMS, PORTS, AND GARBAGE PICK-UP IN SOME AREAS, AND MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS. THE LATTER WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO HAND OUT DAILY LUNCHES (ALL DAILIES, 11/27).

## ENVIRONMENT

¶13. THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE HIRED BRITISH EXPERT SIMONS ANHOLD TO IMPROVE CHILE'S IMAGE ABROAD. ANHOLD SURPRISED A GROUP OF ENTREPRENEURS AND PUBLIC OPINION LEADERS LAST WEEK BY STATING THAT ANY EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE COUNTRY'S IMAGE WOULD BE USELESS IF CHILE ALLOWS THE CONSTRUCTION OF DAMS IN THE PATAGONIA (HYDROAYSSEN PROJECT). CHILE, HE SAID, SHOULD TRY TO PROMOTE ITS IMAGE AS PROTECTING NATURE AND NOT BY DOING WHAT BRAZIL DID WITH THE AMAZON (LA TERCERA, SUNDAY, 11/16).

## SURVEY

¶14. BICENTENNIAL 2008 UC-ADIMARK POLL SHOWS THAT CHILEANS PERCEIVE THEIR COUNTRY AS AN ISLAND IN TERMS OF CULTURE, RELIGION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WHICH ENTAILS A STRONG LACK OF AFFINITY WITH THE REST OF THE REGION. 41% SAID CHILE IS CULTURALLY UNIQUE, 38% THAT IT IS UNIQUE IN ITS DEMOCRACY AND ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. OVER 50% BELIEVE THAT "CHILE IS A COUNTRY VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE REST OF LATIN AMERICA," 51% SAID CHILE SHOULD NOT ACT IN BLOCS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. THE SURVEY IS ALSO A STRONG BLOW TO THOSE WHO PROMOTE REGIONAL UNITY, SUCH AS HUGO CHAVEZ, BECAUSE 75% BELIEVE THERE IS NO SHARED CULTURE OR IDENTITY IN THE CONTINENT. HOWEVER, THE SURVEY ALSO SHOWS THAT CHILEANS FEELS CLOSER TO THOSE IN LATIN AMERICAN IN ALL AREAS, EXCEPT THE ECONOMY, WHERE THEY FELL CLOSER TO THE UNITED STATES. REGIONAL LEADERS ALSO DID POORLY. ON "LITTLE/NO SYMPATHY" ALL REGIONAL LEADERS DID POORLY, BUT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF DISAFFECTION WERE FOR HUGO CHAVEZ (68%), CRISTINA FERNANDEZ AND ALAN GARCIA (67%), AND FIDEL CASTRO (66%) (EL MERCURIO, SUNDAY, 11/16).

## SIMONS